



# **Leadership at Southwest Airlines**

**Odell L. Brown, CIA, CPA, PHR**  
**Senior Project Leader**  
**Southwest Airlines**  
**University for People**  
**June 2007**



# Today's Flight Plan

---

**Who We Are:**

**Operationally**  
**Culturally**

**Recruiting & Hiring**

**Employee Engagement & Retention**





# Who We Are—Operationally





# Key Facts & Figures

- 33,000 Employees
- 3,100 Daily Flights
- 63 Cities Served
- 490 Airplanes
- 737 Aircraft
- [www.southwest.com](http://www.southwest.com)





# Operating Strategy

- Low Fares
- Point to Point
- Primarily-Short Haul
- High Frequency
- Close-in, Less Congested Airports
- On-Time
- Legendary Customer Service
- Fiscally Conservative
- Simplicity
- Fun!





# Who We Are—Culturally





# It Starts at the Top...

**CEO—Gary Kelly**

**President—Colleen  
Barrett**

**Chairman of the  
Board—Herb  
Kelleher**





## **The Mission Of Southwest Airlines**

The mission of Southwest Airlines is dedication to the highest quality of Customer Service delivered with a sense of warmth, friendliness, individual pride, and Company Spirit.

### **To Our Employees**

We are committed to provide our employees a stable work environment with equal opportunity for learning and personal growth. Creativity and innovation are encouraged for improving the effectiveness of Southwest Airlines. Above all, employees will be provided the same concern, respect, and caring attitude within the organization that they are expected to share externally with every Southwest Customer.

January 1988







Used for:

- Recruiting
- Hiring
- Developing
- Promoting
- Rewarding
- Firing



## LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

### Live the Southwest Way

#### ♥ Warrior Spirit

Work hard  
Desire to be the best  
Be courageous  
Display a sense of urgency  
Persevere  
Innovate

#### ♥ Servant's Heart

Follow The Golden Rule  
Adhere to the Basic Principles  
Treat others with respect  
Put others first  
Be egalitarian  
Demonstrate proactive Customer Service  
Embrace the SWA Family

#### ♥ Fun-LUVing Attitude

Have FUN  
Don't take yourself too seriously  
Maintain perspective (balance)  
Celebrate successes  
Enjoy your work  
Be a passionate Teamplayer

### Develop People

Know your People  
Set clear expectations  
Communicate consistently  
Delegate responsibility; hold  
People accountable  
Encourage strengths; address weaknesses  
Provide timely, candid feedback  
Build a bench

### Build Great Teams

Identify the right People for the right job  
Build and maintain trust among  
Teammembers  
Encourage vigorous debate and dialogue  
Gain commitment to shared goals  
Seek diversity  
Always be on the lookout for great People

### Think Strategically

See beyond today's activities  
Act like an owner  
Strive for continuous improvement  
Understand the relationship between current  
actions and future consequences  
Embrace problem solving  
Translate broad objectives into  
specific action plans

### Get Excellent Results

Focus on Safety, low cost, and high  
Customer Service delivery  
Meet operational objectives  
Complete projects ontime and on budget  
Maintain a bias for action  
Adhere to all internal controls  
Demonstrate integrity in all

- Be honest
- Be ethical
- Be trustworthy



# Leadership Expectations at Southwest Airlines

- Live the Southwest Way

- ✓ Warrior Spirit
- ✓ Servant's Heart
- ✓ Fun-LUVing Attitude

Core Values

- Develop People
- Build Great Teams
- Think Strategically
- Get Excellent Results





# Leadership Expectations at Southwest Airlines

- **Warrior Spirit**
  - ✓ Work hard
  - ✓ Desire to be the best
  - ✓ Be courageous
  - ✓ Display a sense of urgency
  - ✓ Persevere
  - ✓ Innovate





SET  
**LOVE**  
FREE

SUPPORT  
FREE  
MARKETS.  
FREE  
LOVE  
FIELD.

WRIGHT =  
WRONG  
THE  
WRIGHT  
AMENDMENT  
IS AS  
OUTDATED  
AS THESE  
UNIFORMS

WARRIOR  
THE  
SOUTHWEST  
WAY  
SPIRIT





# Leadership Expectations at Southwest Airlines

- **Servant's Heart**

- ✓ Follow the Golden Rule
- ✓ Adhere to the Basic Principles
- ✓ Treat others with respect
- ✓ Put others first
- ✓ Be egalitarian
- ✓ Demonstrate proactive Customer Service
- ✓ Embrace the Southwest Family





# Internal Customer Care

- Cards
- Food Baskets
- Party-in-a-Box
- Flowers
- Gifts
- Phone Calls







# Leadership Expectations at Southwest Airlines

- Fun-LUVing Attitude
  - ✓ Have FUN
  - ✓ Don't take yourself too seriously
  - ✓ Maintain perspective (balance)
  - ✓ Celebrate successes
  - ✓ Enjoy your work
  - ✓ Be a passionate Teamplayer



# Halloween at Headquarters







## Quotable Quotes

---

***“I don’t want people  
using rule books as  
reasons not to help  
Customers, or each other.”***

***--Colleen Barrett***



## Quotable Quotes

---

- “The business of business is People.”  
-Herb Kelleher,  
Chairman
- “We’re in the Customer Service Business, we just happen to fly airplanes.”  
-Colleen Barrett,  
President
- “It is critically important that we get dramatically better at developing our People.”  
-Gary Kelly, CEO





# Recruiting & Hiring





# Recruiting

- Hire for Attitude, Train for Skill
- No Layoffs/Furloughs
- Group Information Sessions
- Behavioral Interviewing
- Promote from Within
- Over 1,100 Married Couples



# 2006 Recruiting Numbers

---

Resumes received	284,827
Interviews conducted	42,435
Hires	4,443



# You have the Freedom to....

---

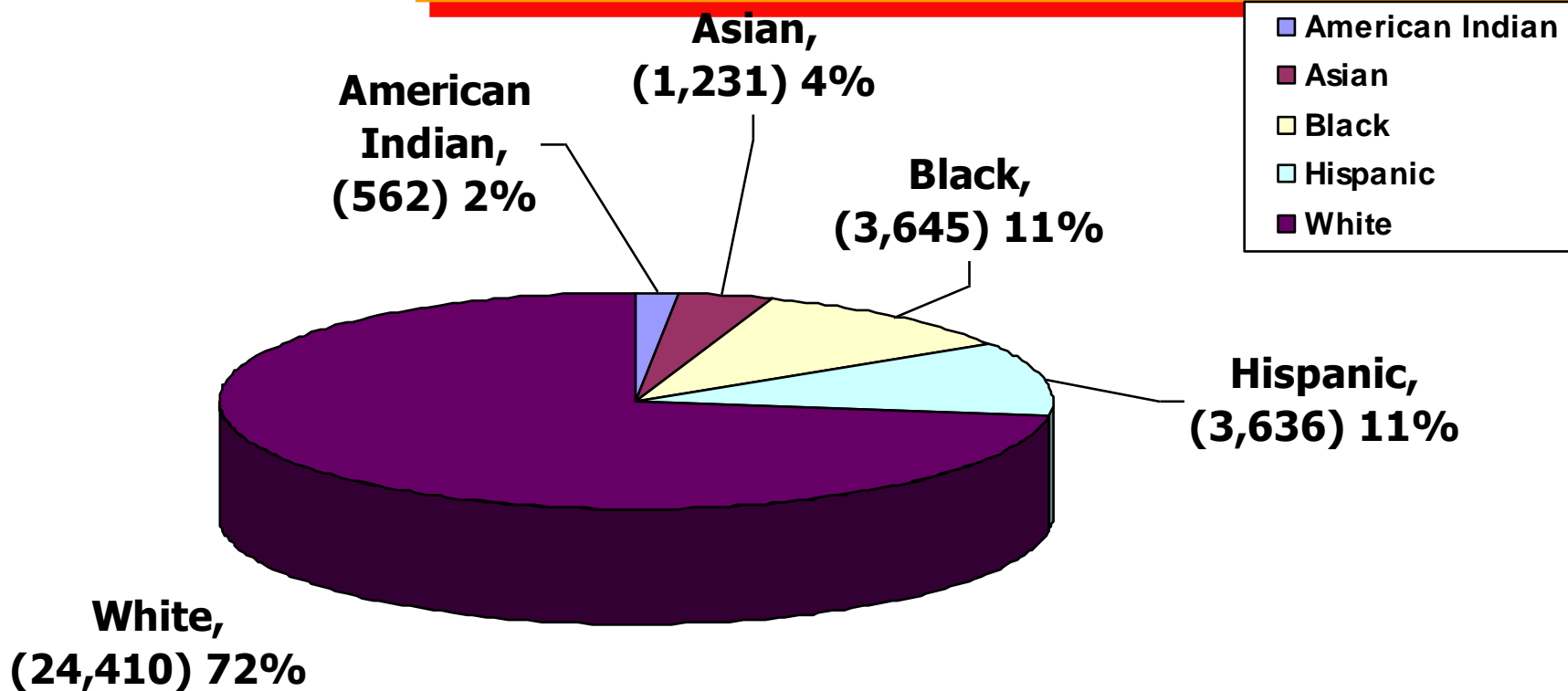
- **Stay Connected**
- **Learn & Grow**
- **Create & Innovate**
- **Create Financial Security**
- **Pursue Good Health**
- **Work Hard & Have Fun**
- **Make a Positive Difference**
- **Travel**







## Southwest Family by Race (as of January 2007)

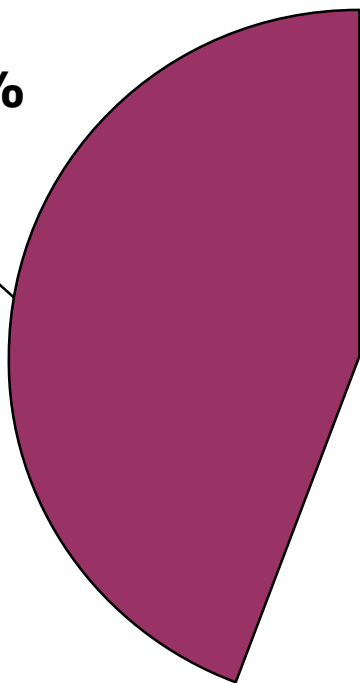






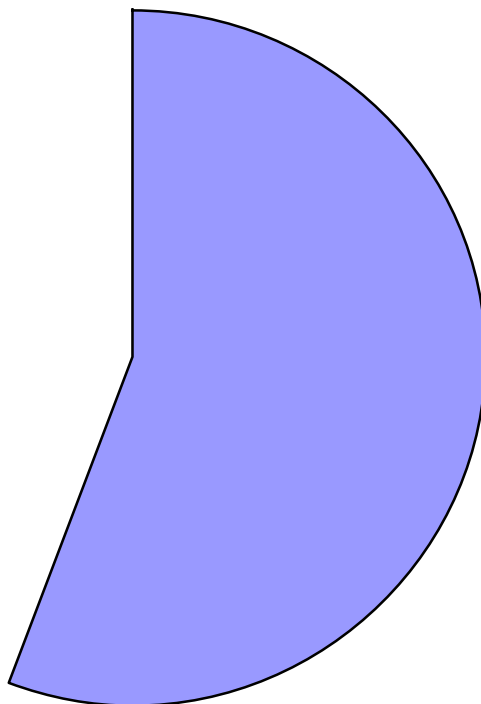
## Southwest Family by Gender (as of January 2007)

**Females,  
(14,924) 45%**



**Males**  
**Females**

**Males,  
(18,560) 55%**





# Employee Engagement & Retention





# Tiered Leadership Training



- **Executive Leadership**  
(Senior Leadership)
- **Leadership Briefing**  
(Senior Leadership)
- **Next-Level Leadership**  
(Manager Level)
- **Leadership Southwest Style**  
(New Supervisors)
- **Leadership 101**  
(High Potential Employees)



# Leadership Briefing

## Senior Leaders—Quarterly (Themes)

- Operational Excellence
- Get Excellent Results
- Thinking Beyond Today (Change)
- Coaching & Feedback
- Team Building
- Performance Management





# Diversity & Awareness Classes



- **Its a Matter of Respect**
- **Goals for Success**
- **Generational & Multicultural Perspectives**
- **Respect & Inclusion**



# Non-Classroom Support

---

- Onboarding Initiatives
- Talent Management
- Stretch Assignments
- Job Rotation
- Speaker's Bureau
- Partnership with Internal Coaches





# **What Questions Do You Have?**

## **Thank You!**

**Odell L. Brown, CIA, CPA, PHR**  
**Senior Project Leader**  
**Southwest Airlines**  
**University for People**  
**June 2007**



# Odell Brown At-A-Glance

## **Career Counseling/Development (16 Years):**

**Human Development Adjunct Professor—  
North Lake College (2003 – Present)**

**Accounting Career Awareness Program  
(ACAP)**

**Individual Career Counseling—MPrints**

**College Internship Program (1992 – 1996)**

## **Accounting & Auditing (25 Years):**

**VP--Financial & SEC Reporting (1984 -  
1996)**

**Internal Audit Director (1977 – 1984)**

**Public Accounting (1973 – 1977)**

## **Human Resources & Training (16 Years):**

**Senior Project Leader—Southwest Airlines U4P**

**Executive Leadership Development Institute  
(Harvard Business School)**

**Training and Consulting Business—MPrints**

**HRIS (PeopleSoft) Implementation (1998 –  
2000)**

**College Relations and Recruiting (1996 – 1998)**

**College Internship Program (1992 – 1996)**

**CPE Program Director for 120-plus CPAs (1990 –  
1996)**

## **Education & Certifications:**

**Master's in Professional  
Counseling (2005)**

**Master's in Human Resources &  
Training (2001)**

**Bachelor's in Accounting (1972)**

**CIA, CPA, PHR**

Note 1: Years 1990 – 1996 were concurrent Accounting-related and Human Resources-related (recruiting and internship) work experiences.

Note 2: MPrints was my own business consulting and training business.



